



File Code: 1950

Date: March 8, 2012

Dear Interested Parties:

Thank you for your interest in the East Alpine Rangeland Management Project located on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Carson Ranger District. As part of the scoping process for this project, a Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA) has been prepared and is available for your review at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/htnf/ealpinerange>. If you would prefer a CD or hard copy of the complete NOPA, please contact Maureen Easton, Project Manager, Carson Ranger District, by phone at 775-882-2766, or email at measton@fs.fed.us. The NOPA was developed to provide the public and other interested parties an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed action. The NOPA also summarizes potential issues and pertinent design features that have been incorporated to reduce impacts to the environment.

The Proposed Action is to reauthorize grazing and change the kind of livestock from cattle to sheep for three allotments: Cottonwood, Bagley Valley, and Dumont. The proposal also includes closing the Silver King Allotment to grazing. Bagley, Dumont, and Silver King Allotments occur entirely in Alpine County, California. The Cottonwood Allotment includes lands in both Alpine County, California and a small portion in Douglas County, Nevada.

The Forest Service also proposes to modify the terms and conditions in these grazing permits. These modifications include design features to protect resources and adjustments to the number of livestock to be grazed based on annual and within-season assessments of the current ecological conditions of the allotments. These modifications are designed to maintain areas in satisfactory ecological condition and improve areas that are in less than satisfactory ecological condition.

The Proposed Action was generated from the purpose and need for this project which includes meeting National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements under the 1995 Range Rescission Act, as well as responding to a request to change the kind of livestock (Code of Federal Regulations: 36 CFR 222.4 (a) (8) and NEPA requirements: FSM 2209.13 Ch10, 16.5). The purpose of this action is also to respond to recommendations by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to close Silver King Allotment to livestock grazing to protect habitat for the federally listed Paiute cutthroat trout (Revised Recovery Plan for Paiute Cutthroat trout, USDI 2004).

HOW TO COMMENT AND TIMEFRAME:

The Forest Service encourages your substantive comments on this proposed action, along with supporting reasons that the responsible official should consider in issuing a decision. Your comments will help us to complete an environmental assessment on the proposed action. The assessment will be used to determine whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact. If there is no potential for significant impacts, that finding



along with the environmental assessment and a proposed decision will be sent to those who commented. If the environmental assessment concludes that there is the potential for significant impacts then an environmental impact statement would be prepared. In addition to the Proposed Action, a No Action (No-Grazing) alternative will also be analyzed in the environmental assessment. Additional alternatives may be generated from public scoping comments and would also be included in the analysis.

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of the legal notice in the Reno Gazette Journal. Publication of the legal notice is anticipated to occur on March 15th, 2012.

The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for the Proposed Action. You should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other sources.

Comments must be submitted to: District Ranger, Carson Ranger District, 1536 South Carson St. Carson City, Nevada 89701 fax 775 884-8199. The office business hours for those submitting comments in person are: 8am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), and Word (.doc) to: comments-intermtn-humboldt-toiyabe-carson@fs.fed.us. Comments must have an identifiable name attached or verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature may serve as verification on electronic comments.

It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. Those who provide substantive comments during this comment period are eligible to appeal the decision under the regulations. Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to appeal must provide the information identified in 36 CFR 215, including:

- Name and Address;
- Title of the proposed action;
- Specific substantive comments (36 CFR 215.2) on the proposed action, along with supporting reasons that the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision;
- Signature or other verification of identity upon request; identification of the individual or organization who authored the comments(s) is necessary for appeal eligibility;

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Maureen Easton, Project Manager at (775) 882-2766.

Sincerely,

/s/ Genny Wilson

GENNY WILSON
District Ranger